

Merced County Projection Highlights

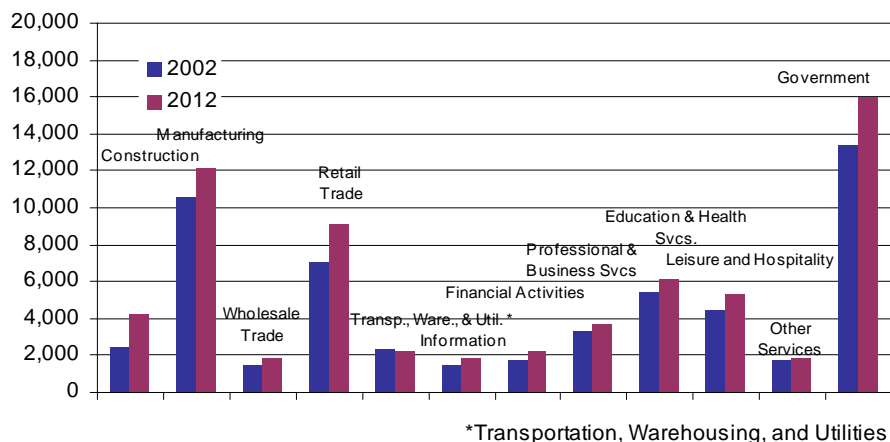
Industry

Nonfarm wage and salary employment in Merced County is expected to grow nearly 2 percent annually between 2002 and 2012. This annual growth rate is above the 1.8 percent forecasted for California as a whole for the same period. By 2012, 10,900 new jobs will be created which will bring the employment of Merced County to 66,400.

Almost 75 percent of all new nonfarm wage and salary jobs are forecasted to occur in Government (24%), Retail Trade (18%), Construction (17%), and Manufacturing (14%).

State government, the fastest growing major industry sector, is projected to grow at an annual rate of 30 percent due to the opening of a new University of California campus. Construction is forecasted to grow almost 8 percent annually. Finance & Insurance is expected to grow at 4 percent per year between 2002 and 2012. General Merchandise Stores (4% per year) is the fastest growing industry in Merced County.

Below is a graph of the estimated 2002 and projected 2012 employment for major industries in Merced County.



Occupations

Occupational projections for the period 2002-2012 forecast:

- About 10,800 new jobs from industry growth,
- About 13,900 job openings from Net Replacements,
- A combined total of almost 24,700 job openings.

The 50 occupations with the most job openings are expected to generate 14,100 total job openings, about 57 percent of all job openings in Merced County during the 2002-2012 period. At the top of the list are various entry-level occupations such as Cashiers, Retail Salespersons, Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, which pay less than \$9 per hour. The top 50 list also includes higher-skilled occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree or higher such as Elementary School Teachers, General Managers, Secondary School Teachers, and Middle School Teachers.

The 50 fastest growing occupations are all expected to grow at an annual rate of 2.0 percent or more. Many of the occupations are in the construction and education fields. Most of the education occupations require a Bachelor's degree or higher, while the construction-related occupations require a minimum of 1-12 months on-the-job training.

